AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-64. Cancelled

65. (Previously Presented) A method of reducing or preventing flowering in a plant, the method comprising expressing a polynucleotide comprising a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

(a) nucleotide sequences encoding a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence as shown in Figure 4 (SEQ ID NO: 3);

(b) the coding sequence shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID NO: 1) or Figure 3 (SEQ ID NO: 2); and

(c) nucleotide sequences having at least 83% identity with the nucleotide sequence of (a) or (b) wherein said nucleotide sequences encode a polypeptide having LpTFL1-like activity and comprising the amino acid sequence YESP(K/R) in said plant.

66. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 65, wherein the polynucleotide defined in section ~~(d)~~ (c) has a percentage value of identity with the sequence of (b) selected from the group consisting of 83%, 86%, 88%, 90%, 92%, 95%, 97% and 99%.

67. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 65, wherein the polynucleotide comprises the nucleotide sequence of bases -3600 to 1624, bases -3600 to 1242, bases 1 to 1642 and bases 1 to 1242 of Figure 3 (SEQ ID NO: 2).

68. (Previously Presented) The method of any one of claims 65 to 66, wherein the polypeptide encoded by said polynucleotide fragment includes the sequence YESP(K/R) located between residues about 100 and about 120 of SEQ ID NO: 3.

69. (Previously Presented) The method of any one of claims 65 to 66, wherein said plant is a biennial or a perennial.

70. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 69, wherein said plant is a perennial.

71. (Previously Presented) The method according to any one of claims 65 to 66, wherein said plant is selected from the group consisting of crops belonging to the grass family of *Poaceae*; soybean; potato; oilseed rape; sunflower; alfalfa; sugar cane; cotton; herbs; fruits and vegetables; rosaceous fruits vegetable brassicas ; and woody species.

72. (Previously Presented) The method according to any one of claims 65-66, wherein said plant is a monocot plant.

73. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 65, the method comprising inserting an expression cassette which comprises a promoter and a polynucleotide as defined in claim 65 into a plant host cell, growing the said transformed host cell in a suitable culture medium and expressing said polynucleotide to produce the protein encoded by said polynucleotide, and wherein said expressed protein reduces or prevents flowering in said plant.

74. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 72, wherein said promoter is selected from the group consisting of a constitutive promoter, an inducible promoter and a developmentally regulated promoter.

75. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 73, wherein said promoter is selected from the group consisting of the monocot and dicot actin and ubiquitin promoters, monocot and dicot glyceraldehyde dehyrogenase (GAPDH) promoters, the cauliflower mosaic virus 35S (CaMV 35S) and 19S (CaMV 19S) promoters, the 35S CaMV promoter containing the translational enhancer (TMV omega element), the nopaline synthase (NOS) promoter, the octopine synthase (OCS) promoter.

76. (Previously Presented) A transgenic plant transformed with a polynucleotide as defined in claim 65 or an expression cassette as defined in claim 73.

77. (Previously Presented) The transgenic plant according to claim 76, wherein said plant is a biennial or a perennial.

78. (Previously Presented) The transgenic plant according to claim 77, wherein said plant is a perennial.

79. (Previously Presented) The transgenic plant according to claim 76, wherein said plant is selected from the group consisting of crops such as those belonging to the grass family of *Poaceae*; soybean; potato; oilseed rape; sunflower; alfalfa; sugar cane; cotton; herbs; fruits and vegetables; rosaceous fruits; vegetable brassicas; and woody species.

80. (Previously Presented) The transgenic plant of claim 76, which is a monocot plant.

81. (Withdrawn) A method of inducing early flowering in a plant, said method comprising expressing a polynucleotide fragment in a plant, said fragment comprising a sequence which is complementary to an mRNA encoded by a polynucleotide as defined in claim 65.

82. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 81, wherein the expressed polynucleotide fragment is under the transcriptional control of a transcriptional regulatory sequence.

83. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 81, wherein said expressed polynucleotide fragment is from about 20 nucleotides in length up to the length of said mRNA.

84. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 81, wherein said expressed polynucleotide fragment is from about 50 to about 1500 nucleotides in length.

85. (Withdrawn) Use of a polynucleotide as defined in claim 65, an expression cassette as defined in claim 73 or the polypeptide encoded by said polynucleotide for significantly reducing or substantially preventing flowering in a plant.

86. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 65, wherein the polynucleotide defined in section ~~(d)~~ (c) has 95% sequence identity with the sequence of (b).

87. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 65, wherein the polynucleotide defined in section ~~(d)~~ (c) has 100% sequence identity with the sequence of (b).

88. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 86 or 87 wherein said plant is a plant belonging to the grass family of Poaceae.

89. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 71, wherein said herbs are selected from the group consisting of anise, basil, bay laurel, caper, caraway, cayenne pepper, celery, chervil, chives, coriander, dill, fennel, garlic, horseradish, leeks, lemon balm, liquorice, marjoram, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, sesame, tarragon and thyme.

90. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 71, wherein said fruits and vegetables are selected from the group consisting of banana, blackberry, blueberry, strawberry, raspberry, carrot, coffee, eggplant, grapes, honeydew, mango, onion, papaya, peas, peppers, and pineapple.

91. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 71, wherein said rosaceous fruits are selected from the group consisting of apple, peach, pear, cherry and plum.

92. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 71, wherein said vegetable brassicas is brussel sprouts.

93. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 71, wherein said woody species is selected from the group consisting of eucalyptus, oak, pine, and poplar.

94. (Previously Presented) The plant according to claim 79, wherein said plant is a plant belonging to the grass family of Poaceae.

95. (Previously Presented) The plant according to claim 79, wherein said herbs are selected from the group consisting of: anise, basil, bay laurel, caper, caraway, cayenne pepper, celery, chervil, chives, coriander, dill, fennel, garlic, horseradish, leeks, lemon balm, liquorice, marjoram, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, sesame, tarragon and thyme.

96. (Previously Presented) The plant according to claim 79, wherein said fruits and vegetables are selected from the group consisting of: banana, blackberry, blueberry, strawberry, and raspberry, carrot, coffee, eggplant, grapes, honeydew, mango, onion, papaya, peas, peppers, pineapple.

97. (Previously Presented) The plant according to claim 79, wherein said rosaceous fruits are selected from the group consisting of: apple, peach, pear, cherry and plum.

98. (Previously Presented) The plant according to claim 79, wherein said vegetable brassicas is brussel sprouts.

99. (Previously Presented) The plant according to claim 79, wherein said woody species is selected from the group consisting of: eucalyptus, oak, pine, and poplar.

100. (Previously Presented) The plant according to claim 94, wherein the polynucleotide defined in section (c) has 95% identity with the nucleotide sequence of (a) or (b) wherein said nucleotide sequences encode a polypeptide having LpTFL1-like activity and comprising the amino acid sequence YESP(K/R) in said plant.

101. (Previously Presented) The plant according to claim 94, wherein the polynucleotide defined in section (c) has 100% identity with the nucleotide sequence of (a) or (b) wherein said nucleotide sequences encode a polypeptide having LpTFL1-like activity and comprising the amino acid sequence YESP(K/R) in said plant.

102. (New) A transgenic plant comprising a first and a second polynucleotide, wherein

(i) said first polynucleotide is selected from the group consisting of:

(a) nucleotide sequences encoding a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence as shown in Figure 4 (SEQ ID NO: 3);

(b) the coding sequence shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID NO: 1) or Figure 3 (SEQ ID NO: 2); and

(c) nucleotide sequences having at least 85% identity with the nucleotide sequence of (a) or (b), and

(ii) said second polynucleotide is capable of regulating expression of said first polynucleotide sequence, and

wherein at least one of said first and second polynucleotide sequences is heterologous to said plant.

103. (New) The transgenic plant according to claim 102, wherein said plant is a

biennial or a perennial.

104. (New) The transgenic plant according to claim 102, wherein said plant is selected from the group consisting of crops such as those belonging to the grass family of *Poaceae*; soybean; potato; oilseed rape; sunflower; alfalfa; sugar cane; cotton; herbs; fruits and vegetables; rosaceous fruits; vegetable brassicas; and woody species.

105. (New) The transgenic plant of claim 102, which is a monocot plant.